



**Recreation Department**

**PARK COMMISSIONERS**

Shirley Canniff  
Leslie Mayer  
Jen Rothenberg  
Phil Lasker  
Scott Walker  
Josh Fenollosa - Associate  
Sarah Carrier- Associate

**MEETING NOTICE**

The Park and Recreation Commission  
Tuesday, February 27, 2024  
7:00 PM – Arlington Community Center (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)

**AGENDA**

1) Capital Project Updates

2) Bench Donation Approval

- a) Martha Parravano – Arlington Reservoir

Special Event Requests

- a) Reservoir Beach – American Cancer Society -5/4/2024
- b) Hurd Field – American Cancer Society – 6/22/2024
- c) North Union Field – Girls Scout Troop 64772 – 3/30/2024

3) Comments and Items for Future Meetings:

- a) Capital Plan Review
- b) Private Preschool Permitting Discussion –4/9/2024
- c) Amphibian Restoration Project – Katja Kwaku, University of Connecticut

4) Correspondence Received: Hills Hill (B. Anthony), Preschool Permits (Various), Hills/McClennen (W. Evans)

5) Minute Approval – 2/13/2024

6) New Business

- a) Artificial Turf Committee Update –Joe Connelly and Leslie Mayer
- b) Open Space Committee Update – Shirley Canniff

7) Public Comment



**PARK and RECREATION COMMISSION**  
422 Summer Street  
Arlington, Massachusetts 02474

**Joseph Connelly**  
Director of Recreation

**Phone 781-316-3880 Fax 781-641-5495**

**COMMISSIONERS**

Jen Rothenberg

Leslie Mayer

Shirley Canniff

Phil Lasker

Scott Walker

Sara Carrier Scott Lever

**GIFTS FOR PARKS FORM**

Contact Name: Martha Parravano Date of Request: 2/12/2024  
Organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Private or Non-Profit Group(501 c3): \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: 70 Bellington St  
Phone: Home 781 646-2088 Cell 781 636 8209  
Email: MPARRAVANO@GMAIL.COM

**Intended Gift (please select one):**

Park Bench

Picnic Table

Bike Rack

Planting/Tree

**Donation Costs: (Actual equipment + installation fee + estimate of maintenance over 8 years)**

Park Bench \$ 3000.00 (installation & maintenance for 8 years)

Picnic Table \$ 4000.00 (installation & maintenance for 8 years)

Bike Rack \$ 3000.00 (installation & maintenance for 8 years)

**Park Requested:** Reservoir

**Recognition Plaque Text** (see attached policy details for specifics):  
Honor

In memory of Paul Parravano  
Beloved husband, father, friend

Dedicated to Paolo Parravano

Signature

Paolo

Date

2/14/2023

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## Recreation Department

## SPECIAL EVENT REQUEST

*\*For all gatherings over 50 people and private/corporate events*

Today's Date: 1/29/24 (Requests must be made 1 month in advance)

Contact Name: Alexandra Guarino

Phone (C): 7322329278

Email Address: alexandra.guarino@cancer.org

Home Address: 3 Speen St, Framingham MA

Purpose: American Cancer Society sponsored Relay For Life of Greater Arlington

Estimated Attendance: 65

Day: Saturday

Date: June 22nd, 2024

Set up Time: 1 PM

Start Time: 5 PM

End Time: 9 PM

Break Down: 10 PM

Site Requested: Hurd Field

Area at Site Requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Activities: We will celebrate cancer survivors, caregivers, and lost loved ones through several ceremonies

We will have fun lawn games, a bake sale, and most importantly, take laps around

the track to honor our local heroes.

Will food be on site? ☒ Yes No Please list all food: Bake Sale

Will you be promoting this event via social media? ☒ Yes No

Fees:

Category	Group	Rate
Special Event	Arlington Resident/Organization	\$25/hr
Special Event	Non Arlington Resident/ Organizations	\$50/hr

## Additional Requirements/Fees:

- Site is permitted as is. Groups are responsible for cleanup of the site including trash. If your event needs support from Public Works additional fees will be required and billed per hour (minimum 4 hrs).
- For groups over 150 people a police detail may be required, if your group is required to get a police detail you must set this up with the department before you will receive a permit.
- If you will be having prepared food at your event you must contact the Board of Health to get the appropriate food permit.

✓ By signing below I acknowledge and accept the rules and regulations (back) responsibilities for this permit and I agree to release, indemnify, and hold harmless the Town of Arlington from and against any and all claims, demands, losses, damages, defense costs, or liability of any kind which may arise out of, or is in any manner connected with, the above-described activity.

Alexandra Guarino  
 (Signature of Responsible Party)

1/29/24

(Date)





## Recreation Department

SPECIAL EVENT REQUEST

\*For all gatherings over 50 people and private/corporate events

Today's Date: 1/30/24 (Requests must be made 1 month in advance)Contact Name: Alexandra GuarinoPhone (C): 7322329278Email Address: alexandra.guarino@cancer.orgHome Address: 3 Speen St, Framingham MAPurpose: American Cancer Society sponsored Bark For LifeEstimated Attendance: 35Day: Saturday Date: May 4th, 2024 Set up Time: 10 AM Start Time: 12 PMEnd Time: 3 PM Break Down: 4 PMSite Requested: Arlington Reservoir

Area at Site Requested: \_\_\_\_\_

 Activities: This is a walk for participants and their canine companions. There is a ceremony to thank people for coming and share the mission of the American Cancer Society. We will have local canine vendors.
Will food be on site? ☒ Yes No Please list all food: Bake SaleWill you be promoting this event via social media? ☒ Yes No

Fees:

Category	Group	Rate
Special Event	Arlington Resident/Organization	\$25/hr
Special Event	Non Arlington Resident/ Organizations	\$50/hr

## Additional Requirements/Fees:

- Site is permitted as is. Groups are responsible for cleanup of the site including trash. If your event needs support from Public Works additional fees will be required and billed per hour (minimum 4 hrs).
- For groups over 150 people a police detail may be required, if your group is required to get a police detail you must set this up with the department before you will receive a permit.
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Alexandra Guarino  
 (Signature of Responsible Party)

1/30/24  
 (Date)



**TOWN OF ARLINGTON  
SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT APPLICATION**

**Applicant and Sponsoring Organization Information**

Name of Organization / Sponsor: Girl Scouts Troop 64772  
Address: 130 Broadway #1 City: Arlington State: MA Zip: 02474  
Applicant Name: Tiffany Pounds-Williams Tel#: 559-361-5915  
E-mail: tiffany.pounds@gmail.com  
Event Manager: Tiffany Pounds-Williams Contact Info: Same As Above  
Other Contact Person/s: Christopher Williams Contact Info: 617-386-9231  
Troop Treasurer \_\_\_\_\_

**Event Information**

☐ Run/Walk ☐ Parade ☒ Event  
Event Title: Easter Egg Hunt Benefiting Troop 64772  
Start Date & Time(s): 03/30/24 10:30AM End Date & Time(s): 03/30/24 1:00 PM  
Estimated Attendance: # 75-100 Admission Fee: Not Yet Decided (under \$20)  
Open to the Public: ☒ Yes ☐ No  
Requested Location: Street (specify): North Union Park  
Other (specify): Everett Street Side  
Set Up Date/Time & Description: 03/30/24 8:30-10:30 AM, Cones to Outline Areas, Tables for Activities  
Breakdown Date/Time & Description: 03/30/24 1:00-2:00 PM, Trash Cleanup, Pack Everything Up

**NOTE: ATTACH DIAGRAM OF ROUTE WITH SPECIFICS**

N/A (not a parade)

**Event Details**

YES	NO	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will you set up table(s) and/or chair(s)? Approximate number : <u>8 tables, 16 Chairs</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Booth(s), Exhibit(s), Display(s) and/or Enclosure(s): <u>4 egg hunting areas (by age)</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Canopy(ies) and/or Tent(s)- describe dimensions: <u>Canopy over ticket table, ~12 feet</u>

The following is required by your organization to insure the safety and health of all participating in this event: *Note: You do not need to contact the departments below if it is not required.*

YES	NO	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Police Detail: _____ (contact police)

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**Capital Plan**  
Arlington Park and Recreation Commission

FY Year	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	Source	FY 26 Totals	FY 26 Totals	FY 27 Totals	FY 28 Totals
Location	FY2024 Budget	FY2025 Budget	FY2026 Budget	FY2027 Budget	FY2028 Budget	FY2029 Budget	FY2030 Budget	FY2031 Budget	State Capital				
ADA Plan Implementation	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	Capital	\$735,000.00	\$220,000.00	\$155,000.00	\$235,000.00
ADA Study									CPA	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Bishop Field									CPA	\$550,000.00	\$1,350,000.00	\$155,000.00	\$235,000.00
Bishop Playground													
Bracelet													
Buck Field													
Buzzell Playground													
Buzzell Field													
Crosby Field													
Crosby Playground													
Crosby Tennis		\$150,000	\$1,350,000										
Cutter Playground													
Feasibility Study	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000					
Florence Field													
Florence Ave Playground													
Hardy School													
Hubbert Street													
Hills Hill													
Hurd Field													
Locke Playground													
Magnolia Field and Playground													
Magnolia Field Baseball Court		\$500,000											
Meadow/Rock													
Meadow/Rock Drain	\$50,000												
McClellan Playground and Skate													
Mountain Biking Trail	\$500,000												
North Union													
Olason													
Paraisol	\$100,000	\$500,000											
Parmenter													
Pearce School Turf Area													
Pheasant Ave													
Playground Audit and Repairs	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000	\$75,000					
Poets Corner Field and Playground Dr			\$50,000										
Reservoir													
Reservoir Playground													
Robbins Farm	\$1,000,000												
Robbins Farm Giant Slide													
Scannell Field and Historic Spy													
Spy Pond Field													
Spy Pond Playground Surfacing													
Spy Pond Shore/Playground													
Spy Pond Tennis													
Summer Street													
Summer Street/Buck Fencing													
Thorndike Dog Park			\$300,000										
Thorndike Field													
Turkey Hill													
W.A. Pearce BG													
W.A. Pearce Field													
W.A. Pearce LL													
Waldo													
Wellington Courts													
Wellington Playground & Clean-up			\$45,000										
Field Master Plan													
Playground Master Plan					\$100,000								
Subtotal CDBG/Other													
Subtotal CPA													
Subtotal Town Parks-Capital													
Total	\$1,675,000	\$1,725,000	\$1,980,000	\$735,000	\$235,000	\$735,000	\$0	\$0					

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## Fw: Amphibian Restoration Project in Arlington

RecOffice <recoffice@town.arlington.ma.us>

Mon 2/12/2024 9:16 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

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**From:** Katja Kwaku <katja.kwaku@uconn.edu>

**Sent:** Friday, February 9, 2024 12:27 PM

**To:** RecOffice <recoffice@town.arlington.ma.us>

**Subject:** Amphibian Restoration Project in Arlington

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello,

My name is Katja and I am an Ecology and Evolutionary Biology PhD candidate at the University of Connecticut. As part of my project, I am hoping to restore wood frog and spring peeper populations to some vernal pools in Arlington (including at Menotomy Rocks Park, McClennen Park, and by the Arlington Reservoir) starting this spring and summer. Arlington's Conservation Commission and the MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife have approved this project, and I was wondering what other permissions I would need to obtain from the Recreation department to implement this project on park properties. I would be happy to set up a meeting to discuss my plans more specifically.

Thank you very much!

Katja Kwaku

--

Katja M. Kwaku

PhD Candidate, Urban Lab

Ecology and Evolutionary Biology

University of Connecticut

She/Her/Hers

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## Restoration of Wood Frog and Spring Peeper Populations to Urban Ponds in Arlington, MA

Wood frogs (*Lithobates sylvaticus*) and spring peepers (*Pseudacris crucifer*) are frog species native to Massachusetts with documented occurrence records throughout the state. However, habitat fragmentation and modification by humans has caused extirpations in now-urban areas. This project aims to restore wood frog and spring peeper populations to some urban ponds in Arlington, MA. Restoring and conserving urban frog populations will not only increase the biodiversity of the area, but also enhance local food webs, increase pest control, and strengthen human connections with nature by increasing nature sounds and visual encounters, which can promote well-being.

Likely sites for this restoration project in Arlington include temporary ponds at Menotomy Rocks Park, McClennen Park, Arlington Reservoir, and Meadowbrook Park. Source populations will come from rural ponds in Weston, MA and potentially one pond in Wayland, MA owned by the Sudbury Valley Trustees. Urban and rural ponds will be <20km apart. To further minimize the risk of spreading or transferring pathogens among study ponds, all nets, footwear, and other equipment will be disinfected with a 3% bleach solution between ponds according to [NEPARC protocols](#). This project has been approved by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, the Arlington Conservation Commission, the Weston Conservation Commission, and the Sudbury Valley Trustees.

Wood frog and spring peeper eggs from rural ponds will be transferred to enclosures within urban ponds. To ensure the long-term sustainability of source populations, only a small fraction (<10%) of the eggs in source ponds will be collected. Wood frog and spring peeper eggs from rural ponds will also be placed in enclosures. Eggs will be rinsed with recipient pond water and a 0.1% hydrogen peroxide solution before introduction to enclosures to prevent the transfer of any pathogens. Each of the urban ponds will contain eggs from each of the rural ponds, but each rural pond will only contain its own eggs. Having them in enclosures allows for the monitoring and comparison of urban and rural larval growth and survival rates. Initial egg enclosures are made of 40x28x17cm plastic containers with floats and with mesh openings on the sides that allow water to move in and out of the container. Each container will contain 1-2 partial egg masses. Once they are hatchlings (Gosner stage ~24), the larvae will be moved to 30cm diameter mesh cylindrical enclosures made of plastic-coated garden fencing and fiberglass window screening and stocked with leaf litter. Each of these enclosures will be stocked with 20-25 larvae. Both types of enclosures will be closed to exclude potential predators. Similar projects in Milford, CT and Bangor, ME have documented similar wood frog larval survival rates and performance between urban and rural groups.

Once the tadpoles are close to metamorphosis (Gosner stage ~40), I will batch- mark them with calcein fluorochrome following the procedures of [Andis \(2018\)](#). This involves submerging them in a 1.0% calcein solution for 3.5-4 mins and then rinsing them with distilled water before releasing them into the pond. Over the following years, I will conduct surveys within 20m of each pond to find juveniles. The calcein labels will be detected with a 440-460nm flashlight and corresponding glasses. I will use and occupancy modelling and mark-recapture methods to

Katja Kwaku, M.S.  
University of Connecticut

estimate and compare the survival rates of urban and rural juvenile frogs. This will also give insight into juvenile dispersal behavior, a topic which is currently poorly understood in amphibian ecology. In years 2 and 3, I will document the presence of any egg masses or calling individuals in the urban groups as signs of successful recruitment and restoration. Wood frogs and spring peepers are the ideal amphibian species for this project because of their relatively short generation times, ability to be detected auditorily as adults, and positive contributions to the ecosystem and ecosystem services.

## Hill's Hill - Protect Nature

Becky Anthony <bck.anthony@gmail.com>

Sat 2/10/2024 2:50 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Park and Rec Commissioners

The Hill's Hill project needs to balance recreation and preservation. I'm writing to ask the PRC strictly adhere to the funding conditions for the Hill's Hill project. This means protecting the natural environment while enabling biking.

Specifically, please locate any constructed areas like Skills or a Pump Track outside the core woods. In addition, bike trails should be constructed with habitat protection as a priority. Walkers and neighbors need full consideration

Arlington has limited wooded spaces. We need to protect nature at Hill's Hill.

Thank you.

Rebecca H Anthony

resident and tax payer, voter in Arlington 26 years

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## FEES FOR PEOPLE TO USE A PARK GTFOH

J T Landers <jtl4378@gmail.com>

Sat 2/10/2024 6:58 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

<https://x.com/brepwbz/status/1755548413297402034?s=46&t=8buVG1ltrl-YTbsPfv4o8g>

This you? This is TERRIBLE idea all your to own?

People pay taxes for public space and now you want to charge for the use of PUBLIC SPACE.

Your just a big bag of Vinegar and Water...in other words you are a D-Bag

Sincerely a resident of NEW YORK STATE( who doesn't pay to use a PUBLIC PARK)

J.T. Landers Jr.

## Parks are for children

Caroline Sherrard <cbsherrard@gmail.com>

Fri 2/9/2024 1:36 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Mr. Connelly,

I am very disturbed to read that Arlington might start charging daycares and preschools for using public parks. As someone who works in parks and recreation, I'm sure you know that being outdoors is important for children. I read that there were concerns about space overuse - I'm not sure how the space can be overused when parks are intended for children to play in.

Most of the children in Arlington daycares live in Arlington, so their parents already pay for the upkeep of the parks. Please do not go through with this plan to charge daycares for using public open space. It's literally for the public. The only result of this policy will be that only children with stay at home parents or nannys will get to use the parks during the day which likely will exacerbate class and race disparities in who has access to public parks.

Best,

Caroline Sherrard

10 Magnolia Street

Arlington, MA 02144

--

Caroline Sherrard (she/her)

## Park Fees

Gabe Gladstone <[gabrielgladstone@gmail.com](mailto:gabrielgladstone@gmail.com)>

Tue 2/13/2024 11:31 AM

To: Joe Connelly <[jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us)>

Cc: Jane Gladstone <[janegladstone1@gmail.com](mailto:janegladstone1@gmail.com)>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Joe,

We wanted to express how disappointed we are that the town is considering user fees for public parks. Parks should be available for everyone to use without cost. I could understand charging a fee for exclusive use (i.e. reserving field space). But daycares do not have exclusive use. Parks are meant to be used, and complaints about overuse are ridiculous.

Daycare is already prohibitively expensive in Arlington, and daycares have high overhead costs. Any fees will be passed on to families. Or daycares will not use parks at all -- is that the goal? Nannies and stay-at-home parents can take their children to parks without any cost, which is unfair to families who cannot afford those options.

This proposal is embarrassing. If the town needs more money for parks, it should find other avenues for increasing revenue. The town's \$10M budget surplus from 2022 and 2023 is a good place to start.

Best,

Gabe & Jane Gladstone

Cleveland Street

--

Gabriel Gladstone

(617) 816-8202

[gabriel.gladstone@gmail.com](mailto:gabriel.gladstone@gmail.com)



## Re: Charging to Use Public Parks

Jim Feeney <jfeeney@town.arlington.ma.us>

Mon 2/12/2024 5:45 PM

To: Liana Laughlin <ldwlaughlin@gmail.com>

Cc: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

Hi Liana,

Thank you for taking the time to write in and share your thoughts.

I have copied Recreation Director Joe Connelly on this message so that your feedback can be shared with the Park & Recreation Commission as they study this issue.

Sincerely,

Jim



**James Feeney**

Town Manager

Town of Arlington, MA

☎ 781-316-3010

✉ [jfeeney@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:jfeeney@town.arlington.ma.us)

*Arlington values equity, diversity, and inclusion. We are committed to building a community where everyone is heard, respected, and protected.*

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**From:** Liana Laughlin <ldwlaughlin@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Sunday, February 11, 2024 10:57 AM

**To:** Jim Feeney <jfeeney@town.arlington.ma.us>

**Subject:** Charging to Use Public Parks

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hi,

I am someone who worked in a large family daycare for 16 years. We took our kids to Waldo park all of those years, because it offered the children the opportunity to run across a field, and roll and sled down a hill. It was something the back yard could not offer children. Their gross motor development was greatly enhanced by being able to use the park. Now the opportunity to use that same park may not be possible for the children who still attend that daycare. A family daycare could not possibly afford to pay for time using a park. Daycares are already so expensive for families, and the staff that works in daycares are already getting paid very little. If park use must be paid for then either daycare expenses will rise, or daycares may opt out to using the parks, and simply take children out for walks. When children are 1-4 years old, a walk is nothing in comparison to using a park in all its dimensions and challenges.

Liana Laughlin (She, Her, Hers)

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## charging daycares for public parks

Meredith Kench <djdivadesign@gmail.com>

Tue 2/13/2024 9:21 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello,

Recently it was brought to my attention that the town plans to charge daycares and preschools a fee to use the public playgrounds. Daycare costs in Massachusetts are already the most expensive in the country. I pay over 30k per kid per year for daycare and my daycare is cheaper than some others in the area. If the town adds this fee to daycares - they will just pass it onto the parents making child care even less affordable than it already is. The whole point is these are public spaces for use by everyone for free - that's what our high taxes pay for. Some of the town's budget should be going towards maintaining the playgrounds.

Additionally, how will the town police this? Are we going to spend more money on police to patrol the playgrounds to ensure who's paid to use it and who is eligible to use it for free? What about summer camp programs that use the playgrounds? There's no mention of them getting the fee. What about after school programs that may use the playgrounds are they too expected to pay the fee adding to the cost of after care and camp? Lastly, what about the daycares or preschools that have their own playgrounds - are they going to be imposed this fee even though they don't use public playgrounds? Or the daycare that uses the public playground once or twice a year as something special for the kids?

Please reconsider this - I think it's overstepping to charge daycares these fees for public spaces.

Thanks,  
Meredith

--

Meredith Kench  
User Experience . UI Design . Usability . Web Design  
[djdivadesigns@gmail.com](mailto:djdivadesigns@gmail.com)  
617.930.0792

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## Charging Daycares for Playground Use

Potter, Christopher <christopher\_potter@gse.harvard.edu>

Tue 2/13/2024 9:44 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

Cc: Jim Feeney <jfeeney@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

To Whom It May Concern:

As 15 year resident of Arlington with 2 kids, I find the proposal to charge daycare centers for use of playgrounds to be insane and elitist. What does this say about our community?

Do better!

Best,  
Christopher Potter  
89 Orient Avenue  
617-733-4866

Sent from my iPhone

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## Opposition to Permitting and Fees for daycare use of playgrounds

Lily Chung <lilyechung@gmail.com>

Mon 2/12/2024 3:33 PM

To: Scott Walker <Swalker@town.arlington.ma.us>; Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello,

I am writing to express my opposition to the plan to require that daycares and preschools obtain permits and pay fees to use Arlington's public playgrounds. I believe strongly that this will place an unfair burden on both childcare providers and the families of young children who are already paying high costs for child care.

In reviewing the Commission's minutes from the November 28, 2023 meeting, it appears that the impetus for this new structure was complaints that daycare groups were crowding out others, and that daycare use leads to excessive wear and tear on the playground. As to the first point, imposing fees is not going to prevent this use, it only means that daycares, and the families using them, will have to pay. As you may be aware, the EEC requires that children in licensed facilities spend 60 minutes outdoors each day, and for many childcare facilities, public parks are the only real options.

To the second point, without some concrete, scientific study, it is hard to see how one can draw the conclusion that daycare children are causing the bulk of wear and tear on playgrounds. Typically, a daycare group might be 10-15 children, aged 2-4 years old, often weighing 25-40 pounds each. I would imagine that a lot of the wear and tear comes from playground equipment existing outdoors and being exposed to the elements. Furthermore, playgrounds are used by hundreds of people, and often older children and even teenagers. I recognize that it is essentially impossible to assess a fee against individual users, but asserting that a group of toddlers from a daycare is causing more wear and tear than teenagers, or even other young children who visit the park daily with a stay at home parent, nanny, or other family member, seems like pure speculation, and assessing a fee against daycares seems much more about that being an easy group to identify and assess a fee against than any equitable assessment that they are more responsible for wear and tear.

There is also a note that this fee structure is similar to fees assessed for sports teams using the fields, or to individuals renting space for private events. However, I see two significant differences. First, the use of fields for sports teams does seem to have observable, quantifiable wear and tear on the field. I have a child who participated in ASC, and I was able to see that the areas used for soccer got worn down and needed more maintenance than a regular field, and obviously that has a specific cost. As I mentioned above, it is hard to see, unless there is some direct data, how a group of preschool children are directly leading to an increase in needed repairs and maintenance. Secondly, activities like a private event or sports team are optional. I have taken advantage of both, and I am happy to pay a fee for that extra use. Childcare, however, is not optional. Many of the childcare facilities that use public parks are the lowest cost options for child care within our community, and the only alternative for a family would be to have one adult stop working in order to provide full time childcare. Needless to say, families who have the resources to hire a nanny, and use the parks on a daily basis, are not being

assessed any such fee. It is clear that these fees would have to be passed on to families of young children as most daycares cannot afford to absorb these costs.

While I do not have a child in a childcare facility that uses a public park, I still strongly oppose this plan as a community member in Arlington. Childcare in our area remains some of the most expensive in the country. Often childcare payments are higher than a mortgage or rent payment. The majority of the children who attend childcare facilities in Arlington are residents of Arlington, and pay taxes to the town already. If these same families had their children home full time, either with a parent or a nanny, they would not be charged. Additionally, many childcare facilities are still recovering from setbacks during the pandemic. Many are non-profit organizations and keep their tuition costs as low as they can while providing competitive salaries to their staff and paying rent in Arlington. Many families cannot even find childcare and/or sit on wait lists for care for a year or more waiting for a spot to open up. Adding a fee like this unfairly targets working families, and discourages childcare facilities from opening or staying open in Arlington, when they are desperately needed.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and please share this communication with the other Commission members.

Sincerely,

Lily Chung  
71 Quincy Street, Arlington

16



## Concern on Playground Fees

Penelope Webb <penelope.e.webb@gmail.com>

Mon 2/12/2024 9:28 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Mr Connelly, Department of Recreation

I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the proposal to charge daycares for the use of public playgrounds in Arlington. As a member of the community who values inclusivity, accessibility, and the well-being of our children, I strongly oppose this measure for several reasons.

First and foremost, public playgrounds serve as vital spaces for children's physical and social development. By imposing fees on daycares, we risk limiting access to these essential resources for many families who rely on these facilities for their children's access to outdoor recreation during working hours. Every child, regardless of their family's financial situation, should have equal access to safe and stimulating play environments.

Furthermore, daycares play a crucial role in our community by providing childcare services that support working parents and caregivers. These facilities often operate on tight budgets, and additional fees for playground use could force them to cut back on other essential resources or services. Ultimately, this could negatively impact the quality of care provided to our youngest residents.

Additionally, public playgrounds are funded by taxpayer dollars and are intended to be shared communal spaces for all residents to enjoy freely. Introducing fees for certain groups undermines the principle of equity and fairness that should govern the use of public amenities. It sets a concerning precedent that could lead to further privatization of public spaces in the future.

In addition to my previous point, the argument that this proposal is similar in principle to youth sports leagues that are charged a fee for use of public sports grounds is not comparable. This is because use by sports clubs gives them exclusive access to these spaces, ultimately privatizing them for the duration that they are in use. If this is the model you are basing your proposed policy on, then are you suggesting that daycares will get exclusive access to playgrounds if they pay a fee? Will this also apply to private nannies who take children to playgrounds during the daytime and after school?

I urge the Department of Recreation to reconsider this proposal and explore alternative solutions that uphold the values of accessibility, inclusivity, and community support. Rather than placing financial burdens on daycares, let us work together to find ways to enhance and maintain our public playgrounds for the benefit of all Arlington residents, especially our children.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I hope that you will prioritize the well-being of our community and take action accordingly.

Sincerely,

19

## Proposal to charge preschools for use of parks

Zhitong Zhang <zhitong@gmail.com>

Mon 2/12/2024 12:47 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello Joseph,

I recently saw an article stating that the town is proposing to charge private daycares and preschools to use public parks.

As a parent and tax paying resident, I am very concerned that this measure will end up being punitive to our children. Many of the young children in town rely on private daycares and preschools, and there is already a dearth of affordable options. A fee to use playgrounds would either squeeze the daycares, get passed on to the parents, or simply deny our children the chance to play outside and enjoy the town in which they live. As an example, the town is already charging my daughter's preschool a fee to use Wellington Field during weekday mornings. As a result, the children now only get to have recess at most three times a week. I understand that "fields" are different from playgrounds, so I will accept the charge in our case. However, I can imagine this occurring on a larger scale if these fees extend to all parks and playgrounds.

I haven't heard of other local cities or towns imposing this sort of pay-to-play fine on preschoolers, and it certainly does not support Arlington's reputation as a welcoming place for young families. I hope that you reconsider this proposal.

Thank you for your time,  
Zhitong

20



## Charging children to use a park

L Mic <bangororganic@gmail.com>

Sun 2/11/2024 3:54 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

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What the fuck is wrong with you boomer trash?

You plan to charge children to use a park?

THAT'S WHAT PEOPLE PAY TAXES FOR!

"Wear and tear" is what is supposed to happen in a park.

What, some old cow who lives near there thought of a way to make the country even worse, so that the new generation has even less than them?

I swear to God, do you old fucks sit around thinking of ways to ruin this country?

Preschools are SUPPOSED to use parks, that's what they are for.

Parks are for everyone, and if the people "concerned" about it don't like it, they can sit in their yards and scream at people to stay off their lawn.

Maybe you should fuckin do that.

What kind of idiot hired you anyway, if you think like this? Is your cousin next to the park? Or maybe that's who hired you.

The idea that you would charge them anything is fucking ridiculous and another example of how shitty you fucking boomers are as humans.

I wish you fucks would just go retire and shut the fuck up already. We are sick of you stealing tax money and then charging us for the privilege.

You fuckin suck.

21

## Please stop proposal to charge Daycare Centers for use of town playgrounds

Brianna Walsh <briannatufts@gmail.com>

Sat 2/10/2024 11:33 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>; Jim Feeney <jfeeney@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello Joe,

I have seen the news story that Arlington is considering charging daycare and preschool centers for use of Town of Arlington Parks. I am a resident of Arlington and I have three children ages 3, 6, and 8. My youngest child attends a daycare center in Arlington and walks on some days to play at parks in the town with her daycare center.

I am strongly opposed to the Town starting to charge daycare and preschool centers for use of the parks. It will directly and negatively impact my family and my child.

The parks are there for our children to use. No additional fees should be levied outside of taxes. I love that my child can go to our neighborhood parks with her daycare center. I have looked through past meeting minutes and found this was proposed in November, following complaints by residents who were feeling the parks were getting overcrowded. If that is an issue, then let's look at adding more parks. I try to stay connected to town activities and conversations, but this topic has not come up with parents of small children in daycare centers in Arlington that I've been part of. What interaction has the Parks department had with Arlington Residents such as myself who are pleased that my children can go to our town parks while in daycare? I am concerned the Parks department has not properly engaged with residents on this topic.

What difference does it make if my children go to a park every day...with me? with a nanny? with a grandparent? with a preschool? Those are all different childcare options and they all use the parks.

This is not the same as sport teams utilizing fields. Sport teams pay for exclusive use of fields. Groups from daycare centers do not use parks exclusively - they are there along with other groups (children at parks with parents, nannies, grandparents). Many daycare centers also rotate the parks that they walk to, so the pattern is not predictable, and it gives children a wider variety of experiences.

Please do not proceed with the proposal to charge preschools and daycares for use of the parks.

Brianna Walsh

51 Lockeland Ave, Arlington, MA

27

## Please stop proposal to charge Daycare Centers for use of town playgrounds

Brianna Walsh <briannatufts@gmail.com>

Sat 2/10/2024 11:33 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>; Jim Feeney <jfeeney@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello Joe,

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I am strongly opposed to the Town starting to charge daycare and preschool centers for use of the parks. It will directly and negatively impact my family and my child.

The parks are there for our children to use. No additional fees should be levied outside of taxes. I love that my child can go to our neighborhood parks with her daycare center. I have looked through past meeting minutes and found this was proposed in November, following complaints by residents who were feeling the parks were getting overcrowded. If that is an issue, then let's look at adding more parks. I try to stay connected to town activities and conversations, but this topic has not come up with parents of small children in daycare centers in Arlington that I've been part of. What interaction has the Parks department had with Arlington Residents such as myself who are pleased that my children can go to our town parks while in daycare? I am concerned the Parks department has not properly engaged with residents on this topic.

What difference does it make if my children go to a park every day...with me? with a nanny? with a grandparent? with a preschool? Those are all different childcare options and they all use the parks.

This is not the same as sport teams utilizing fields. Sport teams pay for exclusive use of fields. Groups from daycare centers do not use parks exclusively - they are there along with other groups (children at parks with parents, nannies, grandparents). Many daycare centers also rotate the parks that they walk to, so the pattern is not predictable, and it gives children a wider variety of experiences.

Please do not proceed with the proposal to charge preschools and daycares for use of the parks.

Brianna Walsh

51 Lockeland Ave, Arlington, MA

23



## Children Using Parks

Michael Allen <moa762@gmail.com>

Fri 2/9/2024 8:37 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

Cc: SBadmin <SBadmin@town.arlington.ma.us>; Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>

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Dear Mr. Connelly,

I am writing about the reports that some residents are upset that home daycares take children to parks and that the town is considering charging daycares to use the parks. I find these reports deeply disturbing. I am sure that as a park department official you have a great appreciation for how important spending time outside is for kids. Parks - and in particular Arlington's wonderful parks - do so much to make that happen. Thank you for your work in managing this precious public resource.

Here are a few reasons why I oppose the proposed plan:

1. Most of the children in Arlington who are not yet in school go to daycare, and most of the children in Arlington daycares live in Arlington. This means that the children that daycares bring to the park are themselves Arlington residents. In fact, they are the very residents for whose benefit playgrounds have been created. Nobody would bat an eye at a hired nanny or parent taking their kids to the park, so I am confused why anyone might be concerned about a daycare teacher doing so.
2. In addition to finding it logically confusing why daycare teachers would be considered in a different class of caregivers than nannies or stay-at-home parents, I also would point out that children who have stay at home parents or nannies are likely of a higher socio-economic class than those in daycares, and that therefore this proposal would exacerbate racial and class disparities.
3. As a child of a toddler who goes to daycare (one that I know happens not to take the kids to parks, just to make sure you know I am not writing just in my own self interest!), I can tell you how expensive daycare is. Our home daycare costs \$2200 per month (\$26,400 per year), a bargain compared to many. This proposal would increase the cost of what is already such an expensive endeavor that many of my fellow millennials are citing childcare costs as a reason to not have children at all.
4. Parks in Arlington simply are not overcrowded. I take my toddler to the Magnolia Street playground and the Waldo playground regularly, both of which are heavily used. Even at 11 a.m. or 3 p.m. on a beautiful Saturday or Sunday - times any parent will tell you are peak park times - there is plenty of space for children to play. Parks are not like tennis courts or a swimming lane that can only be occupied by a small number of people. Many, many children can use the park at the same time. I have never - not one time - felt that a park was crowded enough that my child was not able to play.
5. This policy is unwelcoming and unbefitting of the warm, welcoming community that makes Arlington such a wonderful place to live and raise a family.





I sincerely hope you will cancel any plans to charge daycare with fees to use parks. I trust that you will.

I have copied every member of the Select Board and the board administrator on this email because I want to make very clear how seriously I take this issue.

Thanks,  
Michael Allen  
10 Magnolia Street #3  
Arlington, MA  
02474

## Proposal to charge day cares and preschools for the use of public parks

Charles C. Bullock <cbullock.public@gmail.com>

Fri 2/9/2024 2:14 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Mr. Connelly,

I read here

(<https://www.cbsnews.com/boston/news/arlington-considers-charging-daycares-preschools-playgrounds/>)

of the intention to start charging preschools and day cares for their use of the town parks. I feel this is a bad idea.

I am a parent of two school-age children here in Arlington. I take my kids to the parks and playgrounds every week, afternoons and weekends - we especially like the Minuteman Bike Path, the Reservoir, and Magnolia Park, but I think we've visited nearly every one at least once over the past eight years. Especially during the first year of the pandemic, the playgrounds and parks were a lifeline that helped my kids and me stay healthy and sane. They are one of the best things we have in our town.

Never once have we had a problem with children from a day care or preschool using one of the parks or playgrounds. To the contrary, the staff attending the small groups of children -- and they're always small groups, I don't think I've ever seen more than a dozen at any time -- are always friendly and very conscientious of what their kids are doing. The children are never being destructive, or overly loud, or rude -- they're playing happily and using the public spaces as intended.

As a resident of Arlington, I'm paying my property taxes in part to fund our parks for everyone here and for visitors, and not just myself and my own family. I feel that preschools and day cares should not face extra expenses for using our parks for the exact purpose for which they're intended. What does it say about us, as a community, if we have all of these wonderful open spaces for recreation and play and then erect barriers to keep kids away from them?

Please drop the plan to charge day cares for the use of our public parks.

Best regards,  
Charles C. Bullock  
25 Newland Road  
773.520.4702

26

## Charging to use parks

Liana Laughlin <ldwlaughlin@gmail.com>

Sun 2/11/2024 10:23 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

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Hi,

I am writing in response to the news that Arlington will be charging daycares to use parks. Parks are public places. Most children no longer spend the early years of their lives at home where they could play in their backyards. Now children go to daycares, where their gross motor development happens in the public parks. Daycare is already a huge expense, if they will have to take on the cost of using public parks then that cost will certainly be passed on to the parents or to the childcare staff, who already are underpaid. This decision feels terribly upsetting.

Liana Laughlin (She, Her, Hers)

27

## Proposed Park Use Fee for Child Care Providers

dfunkhouser01@gmail.com <dfunkhouser01@gmail.com>

Sun 2/11/2024 9:42 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

Cc: Shirley Canniff <scanniff@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Mr. Connelly,

I write to comment on the proposed July 1 fee. I ask you to reconsider this.

Arlington aspires to be a welcoming community. Child care is an important asset to the town. Many of the providers have been in town for a long time (e.g., ACC and Rogers-Pierce since the 1970s). The providers are often small businesses, often women-owned and generally women-managed, with tight budgets. They are challenged to pay their staff a fair wage, and they don't have a lot of capacity to absorb this proposed new charge.

We have lived in Arlington since 1984. As a parent of three daughters and now, as grandparents, we use the playgrounds regularly. We have shared these spaces and equipment happily with the children from the centers. They are always courteous and well-behaved, and we learn from watching them play together. We have never felt crowded out, nor are we concerned that they are "overusing" the equipment.

Arlington is a relatively prosperous town. We shouldn't be niggardly. We can afford to share what we have. We should be able to invest in our playgrounds without imposing this type of charge. Let's treat our child care providers as an asset, not a liability.

Thanks for taking the time to read. Please reconsider.

Respectfully,

Doug Funkhouser  
Menotomy Road

26



## Playground permitting for daycares

Sarah Hesse <sarah.b.hesse@gmail.com>

Sat 2/10/2024 6:15 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello,

I'm an Arlington resident and wanted to voice my strong opposition to the plan to require daycares and preschools to apply for permits and pay fees to use public playgrounds.

Our kids need to be outside, and the cost of childcare in this town is already exorbitant and many families are struggling to make ends meet. I expect these fees would be passed fully along to families, who are already paying taxes for these playgrounds to be maintained and deserve for their children to use the playgrounds regardless of who their caregiver is at any given moment (why should my child have to pay a fee if with a daycare teacher but not with a parent or a nanny?). Alternatively, daycares may chose to keep children indoors depriving them of much needed outdoor time that is crucial to their development.

I frequent many area playgrounds during the day and have never found any daycare to be anything other than respectful of the space. This seems like solving something that isn't a problem and will continue to make things harder for families and providers in Arlington.

I strongly hope this measure will be reconsidered.

Thanks,  
Sarah Hesse

29

## Charging daycares for use of playgrounds

Eileen Commane <e\_commane@yahoo.com>

Sat 2/10/2024 2:59 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

This is an outrageous idea! Arlington should think twice before it implements such an absurd policy. I don't live in Arlington but if I want to go to any playground in the country I feel free to do so.

Sent from my iPhone

30

## Concern about New Park Policies & Daycare Access

Ryan Severy <ryansevery@gmail.com>

Sat 2/10/2024 2:41 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

Cc: Martha Severy <marthasevery@gmail.com>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello,

I read a news article that indicated Arlington is considering instituting new fees for daycares to use public parks during the day, and wanted to reach out with my concern about this idea. Our son attends a daycare that is a 10 min walk from our house. We pay over \$2700 a month for his basic care, as both my wife and I have full time jobs. We are expecting another child in the next week, and so are expecting our childcare monthly bill to double within the next few months. Daycare fees already tend to be increased on an annual basis - this is a significant cost for our family.

I read that daycares may be asked to pay a fee for the use of park facilities during the school days. The parks that our daycare would use are the same parks that we would use if we were able to stay home with our son - Magnolia or Waldo, as these are the two closest parks to our home, as well as to the daycare that is most convenient for us. We are concerned that the new fees penalize our children, who are members of our community, from having regular access to the public facilities that we should inherently have access to.

In addition, has the committee considered what alternate options will be given to our children if they don't have access to clean, safe, outdoor spaces? This may result in increased screen time utilization, which is something we feel very strongly about (our 2 year old has never watched TV). This could lead to the children being taken to other areas that are not as safe for children, without the appropriate fencing & signage to protect kids from passerbys or car traffic. The increase in fees could also cause daycare to become prohibitively expensive for many families, leading families to choose to work with private nannies and there would no longer be local permit/licensing fees/taxes paid to Arlington. Some daycare facilities could also end up with a teacher-child ratio that is not as safe or beneficial to our children due to cost management issues--understanding there is state regulation for this, but workarounds are possible.

We are also unclear as to how the wear and tear on the park facilities is overly taxing due to daycare utilization. If there are 20 kids who use the park for a 1-hour time period, how is that any different from having 5 kids at the park over 4 separate hours throughout the day? We are already paying taxes to live in Arlington, support the public works, and support the education system we look forward to using once our kids are old enough - please don't penalize our child by forcing us to pay double to use the park around the corner from our house. We are doing the best we can to manage our jobs, our family, our finances, and increasing the cost of our daycare options is not a fair solution for those of us who need two incomes to manage.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Ryan and Martha

31

## Daycare use of Arlington playgrounds

Rebecca Stillo <rlstillo4@gmail.com>

Sun 2/11/2024 10:56 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Mr Connolly,

I am an Arlington resident and parent, and I am writing about the proposed plan to charge daycares for access to public playgrounds and parks.

I strongly believe that daycares in our city should not be charged for the use of parks. Daycare tuition in Arlington often costs more than tuition at UMass, a staggering fact with very real consequences to family budgets. If daycares are charged for the use of public parks, that expense will be passed on to the families, most of whom already pay taxes to the city that go towards the upkeep of the parks. Essentially, these parents will be charged twice for park use - once in their taxes, and once in their tuition increase.

Additionally, the children who attend these parks with their daycare are the very same kids that these parks are intended to support. Whether children visit the park with a parent, a nanny, or a daycare teacher, the parks are meant for all Arlington children to enjoy.

I urge you to reconsider this decision. Arlington's many beautiful parks and playgrounds are a real asset to our city, and I hope we can continue to make them accessible to all families without cost.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,  
Rebecca Stillo

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## Arlington Playgrounds - Proposed Changes

Holly Juliano <hc.juliano@gmail.com>

Sun 2/11/2024 8:34 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Mr. Connolly,

I am reaching out as an Arlington resident and parent about the proposed plan to charge daycares for access to the parks.

Massachusetts has long been in the top 3 least affordable places for childcare. I currently pay more than \$2500 per month, over \$30,000 a year, for my child to be in daycare at Learn to Grow in East Arlington. For comparison, in-state tuition at UMass Amherst is \$16,952. The annual increase in my salary as a staff member at MIT doesn't cover the *existing* annual increase in childcare costs.

I am lucky that we are able to have a spot and pay for childcare for my son so that both parents in our household can continue to work full time.

To say the town will be charging daycares to use the parks is a misnomer. You are charging parents to use the parks their tax dollars already fund. The cost will be passed on to parents in tuition increases.

We are a double income family that attends a daycare with its own dedicated outdoor space, so this might pass us by entirely. But more affordable daycares are less likely to have their own outdoor space, so this move will have an outside impact on single parents, single-income families and the lowest income families in our town, and charge them a premium to have their children spend time outdoors. I know I don't need to cite the extensive research on the importance of unstructured outside play for children. It is crucial for their physical health and emotional development.

I urge you to reconsider this decision and not place an additional barrier to outdoor play for Arlington's kids.

Kind regards,  
Holly

--

Holly Juliano

"Smile, breathe and go slowly" - Thich Nhat Hanh

33

**Fw: Concern about fee to use parks**

RecOffice &lt;recoffice@town.arlington.ma.us&gt;

Fri 2/9/2024 10:31 AM

To: Joe Connelly &lt;jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us&gt;

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**From:** Lauren Allison Flaherty <lauren.allison.flaherty@gmail.com>**Sent:** Friday, February 9, 2024 10:27 AM**To:** RecOffice <recoffice@town.arlington.ma.us>**Subject:** Fwd: Concern about fee to use parks

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello,

I am emailing you because I am extremely concerned about the proposed fees for preschool and daycare children to use parks in Arlington. I am a resident of Boston who works in Cambridge and is hoping to move to Arlington with my family.

As a working mother, my son needs to be in preschool so I can stay employed. The cost of childcare in MA is already a hardship, and the idea of more working parents carrying more fees (which childcare programs would surely pass on to their families) is extremely discouraging. To my knowledge, Arlington does not have free universal pre-kindergarten at this time, so this is a double whammy.

Additionally, many smaller daycare, nursery school and preschool programs are run by women of color who should be supported by the communities where they operate.

If this fee would not apply to children who are taken to the park by an expensive nanny, and/or by a parent who can afford to stay home, it should be reconsidered as an equity issue.

I ask you to please reconsider these charges as they will have a bigger impact than it may seem.

Respectfully,

-Lauren Flaherty

34

## Rethink charging daycares for playground access!

Nils-Petter Rudqvist <nils.rudqvist@gmail.com>

Fri 2/9/2024 10:05 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Mr. Connolly,

As an Arlington resident and parent, I write with deep concern regarding the proposed plan to charge daycares for access to public parks. This proposal raises significant equity concerns and undermines the very purpose of these community spaces.

Massachusetts already holds the dubious distinction of being one of the least affordable states for childcare. My family currently pays over \$25,000 annually for daycare at the Montessori Children's House in Arlington Center, exceeding even UMass Amherst in-state tuition! Even with two incomes, we struggle financially with only one child in full-time care.

Charging daycares for park access effectively imposes a hidden tax on parents, transferring the burden onto families who already contribute through their taxes. This unfairly targets lower-income families and single parents who rely on daycares without dedicated outdoor spaces. Such a fee directly contradicts the crucial role parks play in children's physical and emotional well-being. Unstructured outdoor play is well-documented as essential for healthy development, and denying equal access to green spaces is detrimental to our children's health and well-being.

I urge you to reconsider this plan and explore alternative solutions that address park maintenance concerns without creating inequitable barriers to play for Arlington's children. Access to public parks should remain a right, not a privilege burdened by additional fees.

Sincerely,

Nils Rudqvist and Solmaz Afshar

25

## Don't charge for public parks

Jason Crawford <jason@jasoncrawford.org>

Fri 2/9/2024 9:45 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Mr. Connolly,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed plan to charge daycares and preschools fees for accessing Arlington's public parks. As an Arlington resident and parent, I feel this plan would negatively impact many families in our community.

My wife and I both work full-time and have a two-and-a-half-year-old daughter who attends the Montessori Children's House of Arlington. We currently pay over \$2,000 per month for her care, which is more than college tuition. This is unfortunately the norm in Massachusetts, which remains one of the most unaffordable states for childcare.

I understand the town wants to cover maintenance costs for the increased park usage. However, this fee would ultimately be passed onto parents through tuition hikes at a time when many are still recovering financially from the pandemic. Not all facilities have their own outdoor space, so lower-income families would be disproportionately affected. As research shows, outdoor play time is crucial for children's development. We should not be placing additional barriers to access.

Rather than penalize daycares, I urge you to reconsider this proposal. Our parks are public goods, funded through taxes - they should remain freely available to all residents. I hope we can find a solution that does not unduly burden families in our community. As a parent and Arlington resident, I am happy to be part of constructive discussions on how to address any concerns without impacting childcare affordability.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to your response on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Jason Crawford & Manjari Narayan  
Arlington Residents and Parents

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## Charging daycares to access public parks

Charlotte Porter <charlotteporter@gmail.com>

Fri 2/9/2024 9:35 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

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Dear Mr. Connolly,

I'm writing as an Arlington resident and parent about the proposed plan to charge daycares for access to the parks.

Massachusetts has long been in the top 3 least affordable places for childcare. I currently pay more than \$4000 per month, over \$50,000 a year, for my children to be in daycare in Arlington. For comparison, in-state tuition at UMass Amherst is \$16,952. The annual increase in my salary doesn't even cover the existing annual increase in childcare costs.

To say the town will be charging daycares to use the parks is a misnomer. You are charging parents to use the parks their tax dollars already fund. The cost will be passed on to parents in tuition increases.

I am a fulltime working single parent and would certainly feel the impact of charging a premium to have our children spend time outdoors. I know I don't need to cite the extensive research on the importance of unstructured outside play for children. It is crucial for their physical health and emotional development.

I urge you to reconsider this decision and not place an additional burden on working parents and daycare centers, and an additional barrier to play for Arlington's kids.

Yours sincerely,  
Charlotte Porter

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## Charging daycares/preschools to use public parks

Karrie Carroll <kecarroll98@gmail.com>

Fri 2/9/2024 9:33 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

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Dear Mr. Connelly,

I'm an Arlington resident and parent of two young children, ages 3 and 1. Both of them are in full-time care since my husband and I both work. Ultimately, one paycheck goes to paying our mortgage and the other one goes to paying for childcare because of the incredibly steep costs of childcare in this state. This is to no fault of the caregivers themselves who work tirelessly and provide our kids with essential care and can still barely make ends meet themselves. In the news report I recently saw, you're quoted as saying "the intent of the policy is not to put a financial burden on area preschools and daycares" - how is it this policy will be anything but that? They'll have no choice but to either raise their tuition rates (again, they already do every year while many wages for parents fail to keep up), passing the burden on to parents and families who can't actually afford it, or they'll simply stop taking the kids to parks, meaning they miss out on critical time spent outdoors and their wellbeing will suffer. We pay \$4,500 each month for childcare and truly could not afford paying more, especially since we still have 4 years until both kids are school age. What are our taxes being used for if not upkeep of and free access to our *public* spaces? If parks don't receive any funding from the town for repairs as I've read in community posts, that seems like the obvious place to start to alleviate this issue. Charging individuals or groups for use of public spaces goes against the spirit of public parks at its core. I'm quite disappointed to hear about this policy and ask that you please ensure all other options have been fully explored for finding additional funding for maintaining our parks.

Thank you,  
Karrie Carroll

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## Daycare Park Tax

Konstantin Klitenik <kon.klitenik@gmail.com>

Fri 2/9/2024 9:15 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

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Dear Mr. Conolly,

I just came across the article about Arlington thinking about charging daycares for access to public parks. It is very evident that this cost will be passed on directly to parents. And we already pay for those public parks through our taxes.

Our family is very much opposed to this proposal and asks you to reconsider.

Best,

- Konstantin Klitenik

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## daycares, preschools, and Arlington's parks

Rebecca Steinitz <rsteinitz@gmail.com>

Fri 2/9/2024 9:05 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

Cc: Eric Helmuth <eric@erichelmuth.com>

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Dear Mr. Connelly,

I'm guessing you are hearing from many Arlington residents after last night's WBZ report. I, for one, strongly urge you to accept and embrace the presence of our preschools and daycares in our parks, rather than charging them fees. Childcare is an essential resource for Arlington residents. Daycare and preschool are already expensive and hard to find for families; maintaining a quality daycare or preschool is already an expensive and challenging endeavor for the people who run them, especially with the current unemployment rate. Please support parents and local businesses by taking their rights as members of the Arlington community seriously and welcoming their children and employees to our public parks--without making them pay, which would turn a right into a privilege and does not align with the values of the Arlington where I raised my children.

Thank you,  
Rebecca Steinitz  
Cleveland Street

--

Rebecca Steinitz  
[www.rebeccasteinitz.com](http://www.rebeccasteinitz.com)

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## Public park access for daycares

Kirsty Bennett <kirsty1@gmail.com>

Fri 2/9/2024 8:39 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Mr Connolly,

I'm writing as an Arlington resident and parent about the proposed plan to charge daycares for access to the parks.

Massachusetts has long been in the top 3 least affordable places for childcare. I currently pay \$2,150 per month, or \$25,800 a year, for my child to be in daycare at the Montessori Children's House of Arlington, in Arlington Center. For comparison, in-state tuition at UMass Amherst is \$16,952. The annual increase in my salary as a staff member at MIT doesn't cover the *existing* annual increase in childcare costs.

I am lucky that we are able to pull together the money to pay for childcare so that I might keep my job and career. When we had two children in full time care, our family lost money every month I went to work, for two years.

To say the town will charging daycares to use the parks is a misnomer. You are charging parents to use the parks their tax dollars already fund. The cost will be passed on to parents in tuition increases.

We are a double income family that attends a daycare with its own dedicated outdoor space. More affordable daycares are less likely to have their own outdoor space, so this move will have an outside impact on single parents and the lowest income families in our town, and charge them a premium to have their children spend time outdoors. I know I don't need to cite the extensive research on the importance of unstructured outside play for children. It is crucial for their physical health and emotional development.

I urge you to reconsider this decision and not place an additional barrier to play for Arlington's kids.

Kirsty Bennett  
49 Pond Lane.  
917 655 4392.

41

## Feedback on Proposed Fees for Daycares' Use of Public Parks

Gianna Marzilli Ericson <g.m.ericson@gmail.com>

Fri 2/16/2024 2:46 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>; Scott Walker <Swalker@town.arlington.ma.us>

Cc: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth

<ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>

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Dear town parks leaders and select board,

I've heard from other parents who have spoken with some of you about the proposal to levy fees on daycares in town for regular use of public parks that you are genuinely listening and want to find an agreeable way forward. I hope very much that this is true, and that the communication about the rationale for whatever decision is made will be clear, transparent, and honest.

I also hope the decision will be fair. Daycare is not like sports or other optional activities that charge fees. Daycare is an essential service (as we all found out - and as it was defined - during the pandemic) parents need in order to work. Daycares make very little margin, so the cost of a permit will likely be passed on as increased tuition for families. So the town will add to the cost of childcare for some parents, while adding no cost to others, even though the kids of all types of parents will be using the parks with approximately the same frequency.

Why are we planning to treat daycare kids differently? Is there no more equitable way to fund public park maintenance? How much wear and tear are daycare kids really adding? Wouldn't those same kids be using the parks just as often if they were cared for by nannies or their own parents? How much of the complaining is coming from residents who are merely annoyed that the park isn't as calm and quiet as they might prefer? Those are genuine questions that I hope the town would have real answers to if this proposal moves forward.

Parks are public spaces, not meant to serve different categories of people at different price points. We don't charge different fees for public school students who need varying levels of support in the classroom. We don't charge daily commuters for heavier use of the bike path. Why would we charge daycare families for (potentially) heavier use of playgrounds? It feels like a way to generate more revenue that disproportionately impacts working parents.

Even if that's not what's really happening, it comes across that way. This is the sort of story that, had it happened three years ago when we were trying to decide which Boston suburb to move to, would have been a strike against Arlington. I'm sad to think that other families considering moving here would think twice having read this. It very much comes across as "Arlington doesn't care about kids and families, especially the ones who can't afford nannies."

If it truly is necessary to impose a fee on park usage (again, a fee that will apply only to a certain subset of parents who need a certain kind of already expensive childcare) I hope the town will figure out how to do it in a way that's fair. I also hope the town will communicate about its decision in a way that helps people understand why the fees are needed and why this is the best way to get them.

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If there is anything specific that individual residents can do to advocate for a more equitable way to fund the maintenance of our public parks, I would be happy to learn about it.

Thanks very much for reading,

Gianna M. Ericson

Arlington resident and parent of school-aged kids who attended daycare

--

Gianna Marzilli Ericson

[g.m.ericson@gmail.com](mailto:g.m.ericson@gmail.com)

pronouns: she, her, hers

43



## Charging private schools and daycares for use of public playgrounds

Samantha Wilkinson <swilkinson000001@gmail.com>

Wed 2/14/2024 6:05 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

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Hello,

I'm writing to speak against the consideration of charging private schools and daycares for use of public playgrounds in Arlington. I am not a parent, but I am an Arlington resident, and I think this would be a serious mistake. The money needed will come out of children's tuition bills, making the schools themselves more expensive and potentially barring lower income families from attending. What happens if there is a special needs child in Arlington who *requires* a private daycare or school (like I was), and their caregivers who need to work can no longer afford the private one? Further raising the prices of any school or daycare in our town is not what's best for our community - we need to focus on making things more accessible for all.

As for overcrowding, yes this would generate some money and potentially lower the amount of children on the playground (mainly during the school hours of the school year). It would not, however, solve the problem of overcrowding in any meaningful way or prevent the children who would otherwise be playing there from needing a space to play. This would not help the children, it would help the local government's budget at the *cost* of the children.

There is plenty of available space in Arlington, so perhaps instead of putting up a paywall for children, we should create more space where they can safely play. We have many areas of wasted land here (large swaths of grass and mulch are quite common both inside and outside of public parks), and I'm sure artists and citizens like myself would be happy to volunteer their time to help create something better. It would be a more involved project, but frankly I believe it is still a better solution. If the wear and tear is really a problem, consider putting up donation boxes or flyers with QR codes or some such things, holding an annual fundraiser - again I'm sure there will be many volunteers such as myself who would be willing to help.

On a personal note, when I was a child growing up here, there was some crowding in our playgrounds. Some children I met actually liked it that way as they had a place to socialize and meet new friends, but I was shy, I would just go somewhere else and come back later. For my family it was not a problem worth blinking over. I don't know how much this has increased recently, but when I walk past Arlington playgrounds now I very often see them with a low to healthy population of children. As such, have trouble believing this is really such a huge problem. The children not in school or daycare have trees to climb, do they not? Parks to play in? Caregivers to supervise them doing these things personally? Playgrounds are an ideal spot for people keeping track of many children at once, and this policy makes it so that those people are effectively penalized for using a public space they actually *need* (a penalty which they will, again, transfer to the children). There is no reason daycare and school children should have less right to this space than anyone else. I assert that playgrounds are for all children, including those who use them during school or daycare hours.

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If there is anything I can do to help, please let me know. I would be more than happy to put my money where my mouth is about volunteering.

I hope this letter finds you well,  
- Sam Wilkinson (any pronouns)

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## Park Permitting for Arlington Private Preschools

SARAH WILKINSON <swilkinson@aol.com>

Fri 2/16/2024 8:22 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Good evening,

I am writing to express my concern about the current proposal to charge private daycares to use Arlington's public playgrounds. While I certainly empathize with the need for funds for general maintenance and upkeep I do not think it is an equitable solution to place the burden on the schools and the families who attend those schools.

The parks and playgrounds of Arlington should be free to use for all of us.

Best,

Sarah Wilkinson  
12 Irving Street  
Arlington, MA 02476

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## Charging daycare for park use

Jesse Tremblay <jesse@jtrem.com>

Sat 2/17/2024 1:59 PM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

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Dear Joseph,

My name is Jesse Tremblay and I am a resident of Arlington (Scituate Street). I was recently made aware that the town is considering charging local daycares for the use of our public parks and has approached some of the daycare providers about the upcoming changes.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/amp/boston/news/arlington-considers-charging-daycares-preschools-playgrounds/>

As a parent of a young child who attends one of these daycares, I find this proposal to be incredibly disappointing. Child care costs in the Arlington area are incredibly expensive, as well as few and far between. We pay 10's of thousands of dollars per year and were on waiting lists for the few daycares in the area for 18 months. Child care is expensive and incredibly hard to find in the area.

Just to be clear, we are incredible happy with our daycare (Elizabeth's Daycare on Schouler Street).

The problem I have is that parents in this town put their children in daycare so that they can work and earn money to support their family. A large portion of that money goes to the town to fund programs like our parks & rec department. If the town charges these daycares more money to use our parks, they are just going to pass the cost down to us because they operate businesses that are already on pretty thin margins. So, parents who put kids in daycare to be able to work and pay taxes in Arlington, are also going to have to pay more for child care in a town that does nothing to support the cost of child care at that age.

If I'm being frank, the logic here shows either a complete ignorance for the families in the community or an intentional hostility towards them.

Jesse Tremblay

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## Proposal to Charge Arlington Daycares to Use Arlington Parks

C A White <cawhitema@gmail.com>

Wed 2/14/2024 11:38 AM

To: Matt Curran <mjcurran@town.arlington.ma.us>; RecOffice <recoffice@town.arlington.ma.us>

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Hello MJ Curran and the Arlington Rec Dept Staff,

I sit on the Town of Arlington Finance Committee and find this proposal to Charge Arlington Daycares to Use Arlington Parks appalling. If a daycare has at least 50% of their children either as residents of Arlington or whose parents work in Arlington, then this shouldn't be a consideration. Their parents already are paying taxes and serving the town, or generating tax income. I suspect the Daycares also pay taxes directly to the town as well as via their rent to building owners.

Additionally, we have families of elementary aged kids from out of town using our playgrounds and non-sports field parks on a regular basis. Spy Pond, Robbins Farm, The Rez, and McClellan sledding hill all come to mind. Toddlers and preschool children with daycare staff have less wear and tear on the parks than elementary school aged children and their adult parents.

Just because we have a few stingy residents, who don't like these youngsters, and their "colored", poor, underpaid staff walking by their house to the park or creating joyful noise outside their windows while on public land, doesn't mean the rest of us should make it cost prohibitive for these kids to have healthy early childhood development experiences.

If other complaining residents are introverted stay at home mothers, who want the park to themselves for their child when they go to the playground, my response is go at a different time. My taxes should not be used to deny a 0 - 4 year old time to be outside, move, explore, and socialize with their peers.

I hope you will conclude the additional wear and tear these 0-4 year olds and their caregivers may create is so small that a fee is not warranted.

Thank you for your time,  
Carolyn

Carolyn A White, PT, MBA

[cawhitema@gmail.com](mailto:cawhitema@gmail.com)

(617) 417 - 7177

46



Fwd: proposal to charge daycares for park use

Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

Wed 2/14/2024 10:51 AM

To: Matt Curran <mjcurran@town.arlington.ma.us>

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**From:** Elizabeth Preston <elizabeth.g.preston@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Wednesday, February 14, 2024 9:52:09 AM

**To:** Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>

**Cc:** Matt Curran <mjcurran@town.arlington.ma.us>; Jim Feeney <jfeeney@town.arlington.ma.us>

**Subject:** proposal to charge daycares for park use

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Hi Joe,

I'm CCing some others because I'm not sure who the right people are to direct this email to; please feel free to pass it on.

I live in East Arlington with my husband and two young kids. One reason we were thrilled to find a home in this neighborhood several years ago was the abundant access to parks.

I'm now one of the liaisons for the Magnolia Park community garden, which is a resource for the whole community. We're asked to keep the paths clear so that families can stroll through and look at the plots. Some gardeners work on a shared plot to grow food that's donated to Arlington Eats. Even when we had a theft problem in 2022, the gardeners were very reluctant to lock the gate and keep community members out.

I believed the playgrounds were also meant to be a resource for the whole community, which is why I was shocked to learn that the town is considering charging daycares a fee to use the parks.

One of my daughters attends a small family daycare that regularly takes kids to Waldo Park, as well as others in the neighborhood. The daycare is already facing financial challenges, and they cannot afford a fee like this—especially if other towns follow suit.

I read in a news article that some residents have complained about "overuse" of parks by daycares. If that's true, such complaints have a pretty clear subtext to me: Only families with stay-at-home parents, or those that can afford nannies, are deserving of a public good.

That's not the kind of town I believed we were moving to. I hope you will not go forward with this plan, and will instead show residents of our town and neighboring towns that Arlington values all of its community members.

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## Prohibited activity at Hill's Hill, damage to two areas at McClennon

Wynelle Evans <evco7@rcn.com>

Sun 2/11/2024 11:19 AM

To: Joe Connelly <jconnelly@town.arlington.ma.us>; Shirley Canniff <scanniff@town.arlington.ma.us>; scarrier@town.arlington.ma.us <scarrier@town.arlington.ma.us>; jfenollosa@town.arlington.ma.us <jfenollosa@town.arlington.ma.us>; plasker@town.arlington.ma.us <plasker@town.arlington.ma.us>; Leslie Mayer <lmayer@town.arlington.ma.us>; Jen Rothenberg <jrothenberg@town.arlington.ma.us>; Scott Walker <Swalker@town.arlington.ma.us>  
Cc: Adam Glick <adam@nemba.org>

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Dear all,

You may already be aware of this, but I wanted to let you know about three instances of damage to PRC sites that I discovered during a long walk Friday afternoon. Pix are attached for all three.

All instances are prohibited by our Bylaw, in Title IV, Article 1, sections 2, 3, 10, and 11.

<https://www.arlingtonma.gov/town-governance/laws-and-regulations/town-bylaws/title-iv-public-areas>

They are also upsetting and, to me, infuriating. They represent the destruction of shared resources for personal benefit. I know that the kind of monitoring that might prevent future damage is just not possible, but I also think that maybe some of these acts stem from ignorance, rather than malice. I have a suggestion at the end of this message about one possible way to counter this kind of behavior.

1. Prohibited trail-building at Hill's Hill continues, despite signs placed there by PRC. Excavation, placement of stones and logs, and signs of dirt being brought in are all evident. These trails are used by walkers, runners, dog-walkers, and these obstructions present dangers. The Town has allocated funds to build the MTB park there. The kids and parents creating the prohibited trails are doing a disservice to future users by painting an image of MTB enthusiasts as people willing to ignore Town Bylaws. I'm cc'ing Adam Glick, in the hope that he can spread the word in the MTB community to be patient a bit longer and then enjoy the park that they have worked hard to bring into being. That community should also be reminded that, even after the park is built, extra-curricular trail building is *\*still\** prohibited.
2. From HH I walked over to McClennon Park, and was stunned to see that someone has managed to remove a bench by the water from its concrete pad, rip a leg off, and toss it into the reeds. Motivation completely incomprehensible.
3. A bit farther along the path by the water, I looked up toward the soccer field to see that someone has installed a plywood platform in a pine tree, and attached a plastic slide to it, stabilized by large sandbags. Tree limbs were both sawn and broken off to accommodate this. Given that there's a playground on the other side of the soccer field, it's really hard to understand the impetus here.

Instances 1 and 3 almost certainly involve parents, who are teaching their kids some horrible lessons: that public property can be damaged for one's own use, and that laws don't really mean much.



So my suggestion is for civic education that is connected to recreation, both active and passive. How about a summer program that PRC might run, perhaps in conjunction with an APS civics and/or natural sciences class, and possibly also with APD, to teach kids about the shared privileges and responsibilities of citizenship, in regard to public property used for recreation. When that property involves sensitive natural areas, this education is especially important. A program might incorporate ecological best practices, respectful recreation, and other elements geared to kids, to get them involved in stewardship. This kind of awareness should be taught by parents, but sometimes kids can be the best educators, especially once they get invested in a subject!

I appreciate your attention to this challenging issue of instilling respect for our shared resources, and maintaining them for safe use by all. I hope to hear about solutions that can be developed to involve kids in a positive and effective way.

Thank you,  
Wynelle

---

Wynelle Evans  
TMM, Pct. 14  
781.859.9291 cell  
[evco7@rcn.com](mailto:evco7@rcn.com)

#### **HILL'S HILL TRAILS:**







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**MCCLENNON PARK, path along north side of soccer fields:**

54

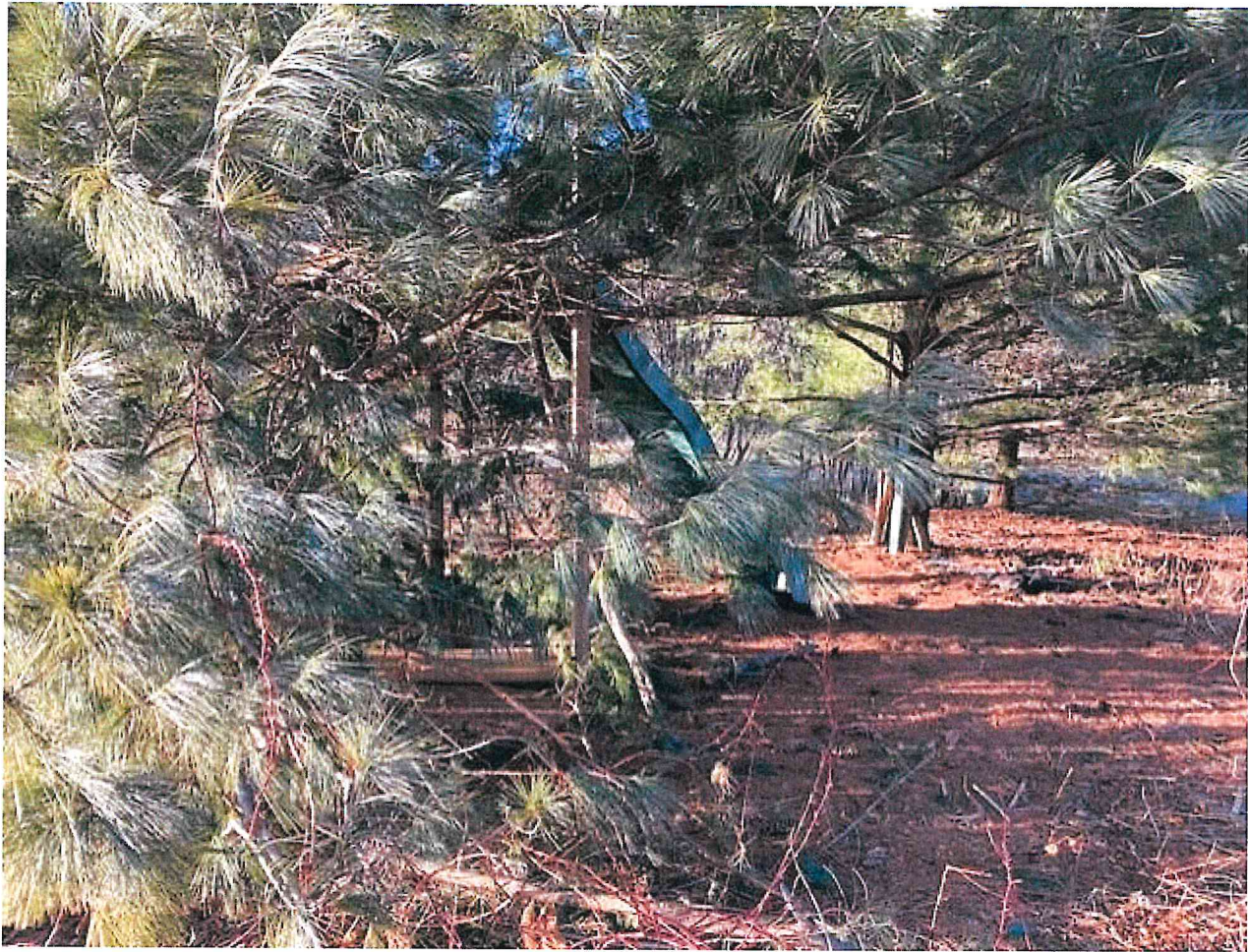




**MCCLENNON PARK, north end of east field:**

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## **ARLINGTON PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINTUES**

*February 13, 2024*

The Town of Arlington Park and Recreation Commission came to order in the main meeting room at the Community Center on Tuesday, February 13, 2024, at 7:00pm.

**Commission Members:** Scott Walker, Phil Lasker, Shirley Canniff, Jen Rothenberg, Leslie Mayer and Josh Fenollosa. Recreation Director Joe Connelly was also present. Sarah Carrier was not in attendance.

**Anticipated Speakers:** Mike Hendy, Arlington Classic Car Club

**Preliminary Matter:** Scott Walker, Park & Recreation Commission Chair, took formal attendance and welcomed anticipated speakers and members of the public to the Recreation Commission meeting.

### **Special Event Requests**

**Reservoir Parking Lot – Classic Car Show** - Mr. Hendy submitted a request to reserve the parking lot adjacent to the reservoir on June 2, 2024 (rain date June 9) to host a classic car show. Mr. Hendy was accompanied by two members of the club and provided a brief history of the 422-member group and how the club came to be. He outlined the details of the event:

- 30-40 cars anticipated based on attendance of their Mystic Wine Shoppe show.
- Hiring an ice cream truck and would like to allow one of the current members to set up a donut stand.
- A “marshall” would be designated to assist with parking.
- Prizes will be awarded based on judging.

Ms. Rothenberg – Suggested hiring a police detail because of the high traffic activity on nice, summer Sundays. Police would also be able to monitor on-street parking.

Mr. Connelly – Will work with Mr. Hendy on the police detail.

Ms. Mayer – Asked for more details about the judging categories and prizes. She also noted that the parking lot would likely be full by the afternoon set-up/start time. Ms. Canniff requested that the parking lot be closed for the event as a safety precaution as enthusiasts walked through the cars on display. Mr. Connelly stated that he will block off the parking lot the night before. Ms. Rothenberg also suggested posting signage a week beforehand to advise people that the lot would be closed for the event.

Mr. Walker and Ms. Canniff – Extended their support and are looking forward to attending with their families.

Mr. Fenollosa – Inquired about additional groups attending as it could impact Lowell Street traffic. Mr. Hendy stated that other car clubs had not been invited.

Ms. Rothenberg motioned to approve the permit with additional conditions including a police detail, a safety plan and public notification, seconded by Ms. Canniff. Approved 5-0.

### **Bark for Life and Relay for Life**

Ms. Rothenberg – Suggested permitting one event rather than both. She noted that the events are within 6 weeks of each other and have been moved from the fall to the spring. She also stated that the organization and the individual requesting to host the events have no connection to Arlington. Ms. Rothenberg also pointed out that the Bark for Life request indicates that there would be commercial canine vendors at the event, which is not permitted.

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Ms. Canniff – Mentioned that there are several other dog related events hosted in Arlington.

Ms. Mayer – Questioned the grounds for denying one event over another.

Mr. Connelly – Noted that the fall was a better time to host the event because there is still water in the Rez. He will invite the American Cancer Society representative to attend a future meeting to discuss both requests.

No vote was taken on the Bark for Life or Relay for Life special event requests.

**Capital Plan Process Discussion** – The Commission discussed potential ways to get the community more involved in the Capital planning process.

Mr. Connelly – Stated the importance of generating community support through co-sponsorship for projects, encouraging the public to bring project ideas to the Commission and getting more people involved in surveys, public meetings and neighborhood discussions. Mr. Connelly shared that Crosby was chosen because it was deemed to be the most unsafe court in town and in the worst condition. The CPA presentation stirred an immediate reaction from the neighbors.

Ms. Canniff - Noted the increasing and constant push-back from the public on some recent projects. The projects in the Capital Plan are necessary to address safety and accessibility concerns while also creating a more beautiful, versatile park. She shared the positive, rewarding experience the Commission was having with the Parallel Park neighbors who had reached out with their ideas. She added that the Commission still needs to create their own Capital Plan and honor their responsibilities.

Mr. Lasker – Noted the need to come up with a plan to resolve competing interests. He also pointed out that a lot of the push back comes from neighborhoods and individuals that don't attend public meetings. Mr. Fenollosa said that it will be helpful to hear the opponents' point of view so the wants and needs of both sides can be considered. He also stated that putting out feasibility study results and conceptual design plans, that are needed for budgeting purposes, too early could result in more opposition as often times those conceptual plans are mistaken for final plans.

Ms. Mayer – Courts had support from those who participate in court activities. Push-back came from the neighborhood who did not participate in the public meetings. Many stated that they did not know about them. She also noted that projects cannot begin until after July 1 (when CPA funding is approved). Recently projects have been approved in separate phases, design and construction, because more groups are applying and competing for funding. She also stated that competing groups, many of which are new, are getting into the same project cycle as the Park Commission. Ms. Mayer pointed out that ARPA funding is no longer available and state money secured by Sean Garballey is an occasional source of funding but is not something that can be worked into a long range capital plan.

Mr. Walker – Suggested posting a Capital Plan 6 months to a year in advance to invite sponsorship. He feels it makes more sense to reduce the number of projects to increase the likelihood of being awarded funding.

Ms. Rothenberg – Added that it may be time to consider doing one project per year. With the Commission's involvement in other department projects (school playgrounds) and multiple PRC projects, there is a lot of extra work for the department. She also suggested the need to educate the public more about the Capital process.

Mr. Connelly – Will share the multi-year Capital Plan with the Commission for review and further discussion about timelines, public notification and gathering support and input. Ms. Rothenberg suggested a "Project Page" to share potential projects with the public. Mr. Lasker shared that the City of

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Boston's website includes a list of conceptual design projects, awarded projects and brief bullet-point updates.

Ms. Canniff – Suggested an informal “neighborhood chat” prior to formal public meetings. Mr. Fenollosa noted a previous suggestion to conduct surveys during Town Day events. Ms. Mayer pointed out that Envision Arlington surveys are distributed annually to every household in town along with the census. Survey respondents tend to be the same households each year.

#### **Comments and Items for Future Meetings**

- Park/Playground Permitting

#### **Correspondence Received**

Gabrielle Keller – Request for berm to address disappearing bird habitats.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

- 1/23/2024 – Mr. Lasker motioned to approve the minutes, as written, seconded by Ms. Rothenberg. Approved 4-0 with Ms. Mayer abstaining from the vote.

#### **New Business**

- a. Artificial Turf Committee Update – Mr. Connelly attended the sub-committee meeting today. Experts presented their findings to the committee.

A list of topics with bullet points will be compiled and shared with the public. The document will also include recommendations.

- b. Open Space Committee – Ms. Canniff, no updates.

#### **Public Comment** – N/A

Ms. Canniff motioned to adjourn at 8:30pm, seconded by Ms. Rothenberg. Approved 5-0.

The Arlington Park & Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes were respectfully submitted by Deanna Stacchi.

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